

# **Employing Special Operations Forces to Conduct Deception in Support of Shaping and Decisive Operations**

**A Monograph  
by  
Major Guy A. LeMire  
United States Army**



**School of Advanced Military Studies  
United States Army Command and General Staff College  
Fort Leavenworth, Kansas  
Second Term AY 01-02**

SCHOOL OF ADVANCED MILITARY STUDIES

MONOGRAPH APPROVAL

Major Guy A. LeMire

Title of Monograph: Employing Special Operations Forces to Conduct Deception  
in Support of Shaping and Decisive Operations

Approved by:

\_\_\_\_\_  
[Jacob W. Kipp, Ph.D.] Monograph Director

\_\_\_\_\_  
Robert H. Berlin, Ph.D. Professor and Director  
Academic Affairs,  
School of Advanced  
Military Studies

\_\_\_\_\_  
Philip J. Brookes, Ph.D. Director, Graduate Degree  
Program

## **Abstract**

EMPLOYING SPECIAL OPERATIONS FORCES TO CONDUCT DECEPTION IN SUPPORT OF SHAPING AND DECISIVE OPERATIONS by MAJ Guy A. LeMire, USA, 49 pages.

Deception has been a part of warfare throughout history and has proven a very effective force multiplier when employed correctly. Many esteemed military theorists have espoused the merits of deception including: Sun Tzu, Carl von Clausewitz, Mao Tse Tung, and Basil Liddell Hart. The challenge, however, in incorporating military deception is that it can be very difficult to plan, coordinate, and synchronize from the strategic through the operational and tactical levels of war. The increased demand for intelligence, information superiority, as well as the increased need for operational security to conduct successful deception also present a significant challenge to military planners. Additionally, deception requires a great deal of creativity and unconventional thinking on the part of the deceiver and is considered more art than science which makes it difficult to train within the military. Although the U.S. conventional military practiced deception at all levels of war on a number of occasions during World War II, it has since significantly reduced its use of deception above the tactical level, opting instead, to rely on its superior firepower, maneuver, and technology. However, while the conventional military has decreased its use of deception over the last sixty years, another force within the U.S. military, Special Operations Forces (SOF) has included the art of deception in their operations throughout their history. These highly trained soldiers depend on deception as a force multiplier and provide the U.S. military a unique tool with which to employ deception in support of large-scale conventional operations.

This monograph examines the art of deception and analyzes the potential use of employing U.S. Special Operations Forces to conduct deception in support of conventional shaping and decisive operations. The study begins with an introduction to deception and discusses why, in the aggregate, deception operations have declined for the U.S. over the last six decades while at the same time, increasing for Special Operations Forces. The study then examines some of the theory and doctrine associated with deception and underscores the discrepancies between what theory and doctrine state regarding deception as opposed to what is actually practiced in the U.S. military. The next section gives a brief history of SOF followed by historical strategic and operational level deception operations which include one example where SOF functioned as a deception effort in support of conventional shaping and decisive operations. Additionally, the study analyzes some of the problems associated with the interoperability of SOF and the conventional military that have contributed to SOF's exclusion as a supporting deception effort in past operations.

The monograph concludes that the future of warfare will force the U.S. to do more with less, and as a consequence, deception operations will be employed as an economy of force option to facilitate the U.S. achieving its goals. Additionally, the monograph contends that SOF is a superb tool in the U.S. military's arsenal to conduct deception in support of shaping and decisive operations. Finally, the study offers recommendations on how to pursue better deception education and training within the U.S. military and also offers suggestions regarding better interoperability between SOF and the conventional military for improved deception operations.

## TABLE OF CONTENTS

TABLE OF CONTENTS .....	1
CHAPTER ONE .....	5
INTRODUCTION .....	5
CHAPTER TWO.....	10
DECEPTION THEORY, DOCTRINE, AND ANALYSIS.....	10
Theory : What Some of the Experts Say .....	10
U.S. Doctrine and Analysis .....	13
CHAPTER THREE .....	19
SPECIAL OPERATIONS FORCES POTENTIAL FOR DECEPTION.....	19
SOF Advantages .....	19
Brief Historical Overview of SOF .....	20
Contributing Factors to SOF's Exclusion as a Deception Shaping Force .....	22
CHAPTER FOUR .....	24
CONTEMPORARY DECEIVERS .....	24
World War II Deception (Operation Bodyguard).....	24
Korea .....	28
Vietnam.....	29
Soviet Deception.....	30
Yom Kippur War .....	36
Deception in the Gulf War .....	38
CHAPTER FIVE.....	42
CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS .....	42
Conclusions .....	42
Recommendations.....	47
BIBLIOGRAPHY.....	51

# CHAPTER ONE

## INTRODUCTION

*All Warfare is based on Deception.*  
-Sun Tzu

Deception has been a part of warfare throughout history and has often proved extremely successful for those with the imaginativeness, determination and discipline to implement it. The Greeks used deception successfully against the Trojans during the Trojan War, the Allies incorporated an elaborate and incredibly successful deception plan as part of their overall campaign in the Normandy Invasion during World War II, and more recently, in 1991, Coalition forces used deception to initiate the ground war during Operation Desert Storm. Although good deception offers serious advantages to those willing to use it, deception can be very challenging to implement at the strategic and operational level. It requires an integrated, systemic effort, as well as a clear intelligence advantage and in many ways is more art than science. Deception is a conscious and rational effort deliberately to mislead an opponent and seeks to create in the adversary a state of mind, which is conducive to exploitation by the deceiver.<sup>1</sup> It provides an economy of force capability that has the potential to save lives, equipment, and in some cases can be the difference between winning or losing.

In recent history, however, the United States military has seldom practiced deception operations. Since World War II, the U.S. has only implemented deception at the strategic and operational level on a few occasions. This, despite the tremendous success deception provided during World War II and more importantly, the overall success the U.S. achieved on the occasions it did implement deception over the last sixty years. Moreover, although the U.S. has had success when it implemented deception during the last half century, the U.S. has nonetheless, elected to

---

<sup>1</sup>John Gooch and Amos Perlmutter, Military Deception and Strategic Surprise, (London, England: Cass Publishing, 1982) 1

depend largely on its superior firepower, maneuver, and improved technology to win its wars.<sup>2</sup>

Within the U.S. military, deception is no longer viewed as a combat multiplier, but rather, a separate capability.

While the U.S. military has significantly decreased its use of deception since World War II, many of its adversaries have opted for exactly the opposite trend in order to gain an asymmetric advantage over their various enemies, including the U.S. and its Allies. Some adversaries, including China, North Korea, and Vietnam used deception against the United States with great success. These military leaders thoroughly understood the importance of implementing deception as a combat multiplier to achieve surprise and facilitate victory over their enemies. Most notably, the Soviet Union sought to integrate and centralize deception across all levels of military art in planning operations. Deception affects and infects the complete spectrum of effort from Soviet politicians planning a war, through generals coordinating a campaign to a Soviet tank commander camouflaging his tanks.<sup>3</sup> Some examples of their successes using deception include operations during World War II, their invasion of Czechoslovakia in 1968 and their invasion of Afghanistan in 1979.

Another interesting point regarding the use of deception within the U.S. military is that while the conventional military continues to disregard the inclusion of deception at the operational level, the enemy where the U.S. routinely fights in “mock-warfare” at the U.S. Combat Training Centers routinely uses deception against U.S. forces. At the Battle Command Training Program (BCTP) located at Fort Leavenworth, Kansas, the threat, known as the “The World Class Opposing Force” (WCOPFOR) is an extremely aggressive, adaptive, and challenging enemy that incorporates deception against the U.S. “friendly” conventional forces in order to facilitate the achievement of

---

<sup>2</sup> Gooch and Perlmutter, 122

<sup>3</sup> Michael Dewar, The Art of Deception in Warfare, (New York: Sterling Publishing, 1989) 84.

surprise and exploitation.<sup>4</sup> The unofficial motto of the WCOPFOR, “Trust in Blue” underlines the predictability of the U.S. forces and the lack of effective deception plans incorporated during the BCTP training exercises.<sup>5</sup> The WCOPFOR “Trust in Blue” to select the least risky, most favorable and most obvious course of action. This predictability normally translates in the immediate loss of initiative by Blue-Friendly forces.<sup>6</sup>

Another unit within the U.S. military that routinely uses deception is U.S. Special Operations Forces (SOF). These forces incorporate deception in their actions on a regular basis and understand implicitly that deception operations are intrinsic to the conduct of unconventional warfare. As these unconventional operations generally involve small groups engaging much larger adversaries, fooling the enemy by any means possible is a necessity.<sup>7</sup> Special operators fully embrace the concept of incorporating deception as a combat multiplier to gain an asymmetric advantage over the enemy. Their specialized training, equipment, linguistic and cultural skills, as well as highly specialized methods of insertions and extractions provide SOF a distinct advantage in executing deception not only in support of their own internal operations, but also in support of strategic and operational level conventional military actions.

Despite the potential of incorporating operational deception and specifically using SOF as a deception-shaping effort in support of large-scale, shaping and decisive operations, the U.S. conventional military has nonetheless, elected to continue to depend on its superior firepower, technology and maneuver to win its wars. The idea of incorporating SOF as an economy-of-force deception effort in order to support conventional shaping or decisive operations is simply deemed too complicated, too risky, or the price of failure, too costly. This, despite the positive results SOF has achieved while supporting the only large-scale U.S. military deception effort conducted in the

---

<sup>4</sup> Bradley K. Nelson, “Battlefield Deception: Abandoned Imperative of the 21<sup>st</sup> Century” (Monograph: School for Advanced Military Studies, Command and General Staff College, AY 97-98) 21.

<sup>5</sup> Ibid.

<sup>6</sup> Ibid.

<sup>7</sup> Greg Walker, At the Hurricane’s Eye, (New York: Ballantine Books, 1994) 184.

last quarter century during Operation Desert Storm.<sup>8</sup> However, even in this case, which underscored the potential value of incorporating SOF as a deception effort in support of large-scale operations, conventional commanders initially protested the proposed deception.<sup>9</sup>

Contributing factors to excluding SOF as a deception effort in support of large-scale operations include the overall decrease in the U.S. conventional military's use of deception, as well as the uncertainty, ambiguity, and inexperience of many conventional leaders regarding how to incorporate SOF into their operational level plans. SOF also shares part of the responsibility for less than stellar interoperability with the conventional military due to a historical tendency to over-compartmentalize perceived sensitive information at the expense of cross communication and coordination with the conventional military.

Although deception operations have indeed failed on occasion and proved counterproductive, deception should be seen as an accepted and integral part of any conduct of war.<sup>10</sup> Deception acts as a force multiplier and magnifies the strength and power of the successful deceiver. Conversely, forgoing the use of deception in war undermines one's own strength.<sup>11</sup> Therefore, when all other elements of strength in war are roughly equal, deception will further amplify the available strength of a state, and its military and allow them to use force more economically by achieving a quicker victory at a lower cost and with fewer casualties.<sup>12</sup>

The U.S. military is currently involved in a global war on terrorism that may well force the U.S. to once again depend on combat multipliers like deception to offset its lack of resources in waging a global conflict. U.S. adversaries have studied our capabilities and are well aware of our weaknesses and limitations and will continue to look for asymmetric advantages in order to achieve success. The global nature of the war on terrorism will demand higher operational tempo requiring

---

<sup>8</sup> Douglas C. Waller, The Commandos, (New York: Simon and Shuster, 1994) 324.

<sup>9</sup> Ibid., 328.

<sup>10</sup> Gooch and Perlmutter, 122.

<sup>11</sup> Ibid.

<sup>12</sup> Ibid.



service members to deploy more places and conduct more operations with potentially fewer resources than are optimal. The U.S. could conceivably find itself at a distinct disadvantage spread thinly across the globe, fighting multiple threats and unable to depend on its vaunted superior firepower, technology and maneuver to win against a highly adaptive enemy. To assist the conventional military in meeting increased global demands, SOF's role will significantly increase and SOF will continue to offer the U.S. military a superbly trained and economy-of-force alternative that can facilitate large-scale deception operations in support of conventional shaping and decisive operations.

The intent of this monograph to emphasize the importance and potential utility of incorporating U.S. Special Operations Forces as a deception effort in support of conventional shaping or decisive operations. To accomplish this, the scope of this monograph will examine selected contemporary U.S. and Threat operational level deception operations. Additionally, examples where SOF has conducted deception operations in support of large-scale conventional forces and their impact will also be examined. Lastly, the future necessity of incorporating SOF as a deception effort in support of conventional operations will be outlined, conclusions drawn, and recommendations delivered.

Chapter Two will discuss some of the theory, doctrine and offer a brief analysis of selected U.S. doctrine pertaining to deception. Chapter Three will discuss Special Operations Forces potential for conducting deception and outline a brief history of SOF. Chapter Four will be devoted to covering selected contemporary operational level deception operations and their overall impact, including operations where SOF has functioned as a deception element in support of large scale conventional operations. Chapter Five offers conclusions and proposes recommendations regarding the future employment of SOF as a deception effort in support of shaping and decisive operations.

## CHAPTER TWO

### DECEPTION THEORY, DOCTRINE, AND ANALYSIS

*Unfortunately, deception is a creative art and not an exact science or even a craft. For that reason, it is difficult to teach someone how to deceive unless he has an instinct for it. This explains why, despite the numerous wartime memoirs and detailed military histories which discuss deception, little has been written on the theory of deception or how to practice it. It is normally assumed that some military or political leaders are 'deception minded' while others are not. There is probably no systemic, structural way to teach the art of deception, just as it is impossible to teach someone to become an original painter. Perhaps the only way to learn this art is through one's own experience.*

*-Michael I. Handel, author Military Deception in Peace and War*

#### Theory: What Some of the Experts Say

There have been many famous theorists who have espoused the merits of deception. Some of these theorists include; Sun Tzu, Carl Von Clausewitz, and Basil Liddell Hart. Additionally, many world-renowned leaders have articulated the importance of incorporating deception including Napoleon, Mao Tse Tung, Winston Churchill, and General Dwight D. Eisenhower.

Sun Tzu, the Chinese military theorist who authored "The Art of War" over 2500 years ago and who continues to maintain relevance believed deception was the foundation for all warfare because it facilitated the enemy's demise without battle<sup>13</sup>. Deception should, therefore, be based on a thorough understanding of the enemy's innermost thoughts, expectations, and plans.<sup>14</sup> Sun Tzu clearly understood the importance of deception in understanding the enemy opponent and using deception to reinforce preexisting beliefs in order to force the enemy to act in a manner conducive to friendly operations. Sun Tzu also emphasized the very important corollary between intelligence and deception and believed that gaining and maintaining superior intelligence over the enemy absolutely essential to the conduct of deception operations.<sup>15</sup> The importance Sun Tzu places on intelligence is

---

<sup>13</sup> Sun Tzu, The Art of War, translated by Samuel B. Griffith (London: Oxford University Press, 1971) 66

<sup>14</sup> Michael Handel, Sun Tzu and Clausewitz Compared, Strategic Studies Institute, (U.S. Army War College, Carlisle Barracks, Pennsylvania, 1991) 40.

<sup>15</sup> Griffith, 135.

quite clear in his famous quote, “*One who knows the enemy and knows himself will not be endangered in a hundred engagements*”.<sup>16</sup>

Carl von Clausewitz, a nineteenth century military theorist influenced primarily by the wars of Napoleon, wrote arguably the most significant attempt in Western history to understand war, “On War” also advocated the use of deception. Although not a proponent of strategic or operational deception, Clausewitz nonetheless, believed in using tactical level deception.<sup>17</sup> Clausewitz understood the value of a well planned and executed stratagem in stating, “The use of a trick or stratagem permits the intended victim to make his own mistakes, which, combined in a single result, suddenly change the nature of the situation before his very eyes”.<sup>18</sup>

In addition to many-esteemed theorist who supported the theory of deception, some of our greatest leaders have also underscored the relevance of using deception to improve the chance of success in war. Napoleon was a believer in the merits of deception. He used deception to great effect during the battle of Ulm by reinforcing the idea that Italy was the primary theater of operations for French forces against the duped Coalition. According to author David Chandler in his book, The Campaigns of Napoleon, Napoleon was indeed a master of deception.<sup>19</sup>

Basil Liddell Hart, a military critic and theorist who was profoundly shaped by the devastation of World War I, believed that deception was an integral part of operations. He theorized that deception must contain enough truth to appear logical to the enemy.<sup>20</sup> Hart also believed enough truth along with the deception effort would make it easier to believe.

---

<sup>16</sup> Ibid.

<sup>17</sup> Carl Von Clausewitz, On War, (New Jersey: Princeton University Press, 1976) 198.

<sup>18</sup> Clausewitz, 202.

<sup>19</sup> David G. Chandler, The Campaigns of Napoleon (New York: Simon and Schuster, 1974) 146.

<sup>20</sup> Basil Henry Liddell Hart, Strategy, (New York: Signet Books, 1974) 287.

Hart also believed deception should be targeted at the enemy commander.<sup>21</sup> Central to Hart's theory of deception was to deny the enemy freedom of action through confusing him in order to create or maintain the conditions of initiative for friendly forces.

Mao Tse Tung, the Communist theorist of the "People's War", wholly embraced the concept of deception during his rise to power against the numerically superior Nationalist Army and Chiang Kai Shek. Mao's military writings place great emphasis on the importance of deception. He knew the importance of understanding oneself and one's enemy and using deception to control the dynamic of a situation as a means of helping the opponent to defeat himself.<sup>22</sup> Mao believed that deliberately creating misconceptions for the enemy and then springing surprise attacks on him are ways of achieving superiority and seizing the initiative.<sup>23</sup> Mao used deception throughout all phases of the Chinese civil war and again on a large scale against the Americans during the Korean War.

Winston Churchill, wartime Prime Minister of England, also fully embraced the importance and potential of deception operations throughout his career and relied heavily on deception during World War II as a major combat multiplier. An experienced soldier from English colonial wars and wartime leader of the Royal Navy, Churchill appreciated the importance of good intelligence and its management in the use of deception.

Following the battle of Dunkirk, the British found themselves alone and facing the threat of invasion across the English Channel.<sup>24</sup> Churchill knew it would take many months to rearm and re-equip Britain's fighting forces and until that time, the country would be dangerously exposed to invasion.<sup>25</sup> Churchill determined the only solution was to convince Hitler that Britain was, in fact, ready and able to meet an invasion on the beaches and defeat it, however, the only way to achieve

---

<sup>21</sup> Hart, 321.

<sup>22</sup> Jon Latimer, Deception in War, (New York: John Murray Publishers, 2001) 275.

<sup>23</sup> Mao Tse Tung, On Protracted War, (Peking: Foreign Language Press, 1967) 76.

<sup>24</sup> Dewar, 48.

<sup>25</sup> Ibid.

success in this enormous endeavor was through the art of deception.<sup>26</sup> Churchill implemented this and many other deception plans throughout the war and his success with deception was very influential with other leaders regarding the potential for deception operations throughout World War II.

One of the leaders Churchill influenced who truly embraced the potential of deception was America's own General Dwight D. Eisenhower. General Eisenhower was so impressed by the results of deception efforts during Operation Bodyguard and the ability of Allied forces to target Hitler in order to deceive him as to the timing and location of the Normandy invasion that he wrote:

*"No major operations should be undertaken without planning and executing appropriate deception measures. As time goes on...there is a danger that (cover and deception) may in the future not be considered adequately in our planning. I consider it essential that the War Department should continue to take those steps that are necessary to keep alive the arts of...cover and deception and that there should continue in being a nucleus of personnel capable of handling these arts in the case an emergency arises".<sup>27</sup>*

Considering the importance these highly influential theorist and leaders have ascribed to deception, it is therefore surprising the U.S. military actually possesses limited doctrine pertaining to deception operations.

## **U.S. Doctrine and Analysis**

The goal of deception is to reinforce the enemy's perceived beliefs; distract the enemy's attention from other activities; reduce the enemy's ability to clearly perceive and manage the battle; confuse enemy expectations regarding size, activity, location, equipment, and intent; achieve surprise.<sup>28</sup>

---

<sup>26</sup> Dewar, 49.

<sup>27</sup> Louis Galambas, Ed., From the Papers of Dwight David Eisenhower: The Chief of Staff, (Baltimore: John Hopkins University Press, 1979) Vol. IX, 1763.

<sup>28</sup> Department of the Army, center for Army Lessons Learned, "Battlefield Deception Operations", 21 September 1997, URL <http://call.army.mil.call.newsletter/3-88/batl.htm>

There are currently three primary sources within the U. S. military regarding deception; Army Field Manual (FM) 90-2 (Battlefield Deception), FM 3.0 (Operations), and Joint Military Publication (JP) 3-58 (Joint Doctrine for Military Deception).

FM 90-2, which was written over 14 years ago and reflects Cold War assumptions, defines battlefield deception as those operations conducted at echelons theater and below which purposely mislead enemy decision makers by distortion, concealment, and falsification of indicators of friendly intentions, capabilities, or dispositions. The intent being to induce enemy decision makers to take operational or tactical actions which are favorable to, and exploited by, friendly combat operations.<sup>29</sup> It defines the relationship between strategic and operational deception as the following: Strategic deception plans are designed to facilitate war initiation, war fighting, escalation control and war winning at theater level and higher. Operational deception plans facilitate the successful conduct of in-theater campaigns at Army echelons above corps. The intent of strategic deception is to influence the enemy's total capability to wage war in-theater. Operational deception accounts for the enemy's induced war waging capability and establishes the conditions for successful tactical outcomes.<sup>30</sup> Tactical deception plans exploit the tactical situation being immediately confronted by the tactical commander and are conducted so that friendly anticipatory processes can be conducted with more certainty and to mask maneuver options. Some examples of tactical deception include:<sup>31</sup>

- Masking the movement of tactical formations.
- Inducing the enemy to miscalculate friendly objectives or area to be retained.
- Inducing the enemy to miscalculate friendly zones, sectors, and areas of responsibility.
- Creating notional tactical formations and force dispositions.

---

<sup>29</sup> Department of the Army, FM 90-2, Battlefield Deception, (Washington D.C.: Government Printing Office, 1988) 2.

<sup>30</sup> Ibid., 2-12.

<sup>31</sup> Ibid.

- Facilitating the execution of maneuver options which may develop during battles and engagements.
- Feign and demonstrate the use of direct approach to the objective, while actually using the indirect approach.
- Feign, demonstrate, or display notional axes, routes, and battle positions to preserve combat, combat support, and combat service support forces, while simultaneously and harmlessly depleting enemy ground and air attack.
- Feign the air axis of attack helicopter, air cavalry, and air assault units.
- Demonstrate and display notional field artillery, air defense, engineer, and logistics units to enhance real-unit survivability.
- When changes to the tactical plan are required by the military situation, mask those changes with deception operations.

FM 90-2 also highlights the importance of maintaining accurate intelligence for deception operations. The manual stresses that battlefield deception planners require extensive intelligence support during the planning, execution, and evaluation stages of the operations.<sup>32</sup> Additionally, deception planners require constant feedback on the enemy's acceptance of the deception in order to maintain flexibility and economy of forces.<sup>33</sup> This requirement for continuous, timely, and accurate intelligence is clearly one of the reasons good deception operations are extremely difficult to plan, orchestrate, and execute. It is also a major contributing factor to the virtual demise of deception operations at the strategic and operational level within the U.S. military.

Overall, FM 90-2 does a fair job of explaining what deception is and how it applies to military operations, but it is far too focused on the operational security aspects (defensive) merits of deception as opposed to further exploring the offensive potential of deception. Furthermore, FM 90-

---

<sup>32</sup> Ibid., 1-31.

<sup>33</sup> Ibid.

2 does not provide much in the way of tactics, techniques, and procedures, which links doctrine with equipment and force structure.<sup>34</sup>

Another disappointing attempt at doctrinal literature regarding deception is listed in the Army's keystone warfighting manual FM 3.0 (Operations). This manual, recently published, establishes the Army's doctrine for full spectrum operations, but contains only one short paragraph in describing military deception and an additional paragraph to describe counter-deception.<sup>35</sup> The manual defines deception as measures designed to mislead adversaries and enemies by manipulation, distortion, or falsification with the aim of influencing the enemy's situation understanding and lead him to act in a manner that favors friendly operations.<sup>36</sup> FM 3.0 list counter-deception as efforts to negate, neutralize, or diminish the effects of, or gain advantage from, a hostile deception operation. Counter-deception supports Information Operations by reducing harmful effects of enemy deception. In the defense, counter-deception identifies enemy attempts to mislead friendly forces.<sup>37</sup> The manual list both military deception and counter-deception as simply two of the twelve elements associated with Information Operations.<sup>38</sup>

Clearly, the very manual that the Army purports to be "The Army's principal tool for professional education in the "art and science of war" all but dismisses the significance of deception operations by merely glossing over the definition of both deception and counter-deception.<sup>39</sup>

The third piece of doctrine attempting to shed light on the subject of deception operations is Joint Pub (JP) 3-58. The manual, which was issued in 1996, is the U.S. military's attempt to shed light on deception for the military joint community. It defines deception as actions executed to deliberately mislead adversary military decision makers as to friendly military capabilities,

---

<sup>34</sup> Justin Eldridge, "The Myth of Army Tactical Deception", *Military Review*, August 1990, Volume 70, Number 8, 73.

<sup>35</sup> Department of the Army, Field Manual 3-0, "Operations", (Washington D.C.: Government Printing Office, 2001) 11-18.

<sup>36</sup> Ibid.

<sup>37</sup> Ibid.

<sup>38</sup> Ibid.



intentions, and operations, thereby causing the adversary to take specific actions (or inactions) that will contribute to the accomplishment of the friendly mission.<sup>40</sup>

JP 3-58 states military deception is applicable at each level of war and across the range of military operations. It further list five categories of military deception as:<sup>41</sup>

- Strategic Military Deception
- Operational Military Deception
- Tactical Military Deception
- Service Military Deception
- Military Deception in support of Operations Security

The publication also list six principles of military deception used to provide guidance in planning and executing deception operations as:<sup>42</sup>

- Focus
- Objective
- Centralized Control
- Security
- Timeliness
- Integration

Additionally, JP 3-58 provides excellent vignettes throughout the publication describing historical examples of military deception successfully used as combat multiplier. It also outlines the deception planning process as related to the military decision making process as well as the Joint planning process. JP 3-58 is a good publication in that it attempts a comprehensive overview of military deception operations, but its weakness is that it is simply too fundamental in nature. To its

---

<sup>39</sup> Ibid.

<sup>40</sup> Department of Defense, Joint Publication 3-58, “Joint Doctrine for Military Deception” (Washington D.C.: Government Printing Office, May 1996) 1-2.

<sup>41</sup> Ibid.

credit, however, it avoids the danger of attempting to provide a simple checklist or template to conduct the art of deception and at least attempts to define deception in a common framework for the joint military community.<sup>43</sup>

Overall, the U.S. military only possesses limited doctrine regarding the art of deception operations. One reason for the limited doctrine is the limited occasions when the U.S. military has actually conducted conventional deception operations since World War II. Another reason the U.S. has only executed limited conventional deception operations is primarily due to its reliance on superior technology, firepower and maneuver to achieve victory. Other contributing factors to the lost art of deception include both cultural differences and the arrogance of success on the part of the U.S. military.

During the Vietnam conflict, deception, already a forgotten art, was viewed as underhanded and un-American. Americans, raised in a culture which seeks direct solutions to problems and which hungers for rectilinear forms in work, play, and in battles, viewed deception as just another communist trick.<sup>44</sup> What is surprising however, is that although the U.S. has only incorporated military deception in large scale conventional operations on a limited number of occasions in the last sixty years and on even less occasions when incorporating SOF as deception shaping force, the U.S. has nonetheless, executed some very successful deception operations. The fact that the U.S. military has not incorporated SOF into more deception operations in support of conventional forces is simply a failure to take advantage of all available assets to the U.S.

---

<sup>42</sup> Ibid., 1-3.

<sup>43</sup> Gregory K. Butts, "Russian Deception Operations: Another tool for the Kitbag" (Monograph: School for Advanced Military Studies, Command and General Staff College, AY 98-99) 16.

<sup>44</sup> Latimer, 286.

## **CHAPTER THREE**

### **SPECIAL OPERATIONS FORCES POTENTIAL FOR DECEPTION**

Unlike its conventional counterpart, SOF has used deception operations in support of its own internal operations throughout its history. In addition to relying on deception as a combat multiplier, SOF offers some very distinct advantages over conventional forces regarding the conduct of deception. Their low signature, specialized methods of insertion, linguistic capabilities, geographic orientation, specialized vehicles and equipment, cultural sensitivity and highly developed combat skills make these forces ideal to conduct deception. Deception operations are intrinsic to the conduct of unconventional warfare and have enabled SOF to use deception as a combat multiplier on offsetting their smaller overall numbers against a numerically superior enemy.<sup>45</sup> Although SOF has traditionally depended on deception as an enabler, it has rarely conducted deception in direct support of conventional operations. Two very successful examples of the potential of SOF to support conventional forces through the use of deception occurred during World War II and most recently during the Gulf War.

#### **SOF Advantages**

Special Operations Forces offer a variety of significant advantages in characteristics and capabilities over conventional forces and in many cases are ideally suited to perform deception operations as part of a shaping force in support on a conventional decisive operation. SOF characteristics include:<sup>46</sup>

- Mature professionals with leadership abilities.
- Specialized skill, equipment, and tactics
- Regional focus.

---

<sup>45</sup> Walker, 184.

<sup>46</sup> Office of the Assistant Secretary of Defense for Special Operations Policy and Support, "Special Operations Forces Posture Statement", (Washington D.C.: United States Government Printing Office,

- Language skills
- Political and cultural sensitivity
- Small, flexible, joint-force structure

SOF capabilities include:<sup>47</sup>

- The ability to organize quickly and deploy rapidly to provide tailored responses to many different situations
- Gain entry to and operate in hostile or denied areas
- Provide limited security and medical support for themselves and those they support
- Communicate worldwide with unit equipment
- Live in austere, harsh environments without extensive support
- Survey and assess local situations and report these assessments rapidly
- Work closely with host nation military and civilian authorities and populations
- Organize indigenous people into working teams to solve local problems
- Deploy at relatively low cost, with a low profile and less intrusive presence (footprint) than larger conventional forces

## **Brief Historical Overview of SOF**

Contemporary SOF traces its lineage to the Office of Strategic Studies (OSS) formed in the 1940s. This highly secretive unit operated with great success in both the European and Pacific Theaters during World War II.<sup>48</sup> The primary mission of the OSS was to train Resistance forces during the war and deception was a habitual part of that training. During the Normandy Invasion, the OSS assisted Allied Forces in conducting the most elaborate, large-scale deception effort in the history of warfare. Dubbed “Operation Bodyguard”, the plan centered on deceiving the Germans as

---

2000) 2.

<sup>47</sup> Ibid.

<sup>48</sup> Aaron Bank, From OSS to Green Berets, (Novato, California: Presidio Press, 1986) i.

to the true location of the Allied Invasion point. The OSS and their Resistance fighters played a minor role in the overall scope of the strategic deception plan, but made a much larger contribution to the Normandy invasion through their disruption of enemy communications, vehicular ambushes, destruction of rail track system, road bridges, trestles, culverts and enemy reinforcements destined for the Allied Invasion area.<sup>49</sup>

During the Korean War, recently declassified operations highlight U.S. and combined SOF units training partisan forces who executing a myriad of unconventional warfare missions including deception against the North Koreans.<sup>50</sup> The location these unconventional warriors operated from was Paengnyong-do, an island difficult to resupply and more than 125 miles behind enemy lines.<sup>51</sup> Similar to the OSS, these forces specialized in interdicting enemy lines of communications and disrupting the North Korean's war effort behind the North's own front.

Following the Korean War, the first official Special Forces Group (10<sup>th</sup> Special Forces Group) was activated and posted to Bad Tolz, Germany in 1952. The 10<sup>th</sup> Group's primary mission was to prepare a resistance movement in the event the Soviets attacked into Western Germany. Many of the first members of the 10<sup>th</sup> Special Forces Group were former OSS operatives who were experts in the art of deception.<sup>52</sup>

Vietnam was the first war to truly showcase the potential of Special Operations Forces on a large scale. SOF contributed significantly through their ability to train tens of thousands of additional forces in support of South Vietnam, executing unilateral direct action and special reconnaissance missions, and also continuing to conduct deception operations throughout the conflict.<sup>53</sup> In his book, "The Third Option," Theodore Shackley outlines the importance and absolute necessity of employing covert operations as an alternative flexible use of power involving

---

<sup>49</sup> Ibid., 44.

<sup>50</sup> Ben S. Malcolm, White Tigers, (Washington D.C.: Brassey Publishing, 1996) i.

<sup>51</sup> Ibid., xi.

<sup>52</sup> Bank, 172.

<sup>53</sup> Lance Q. Zedric and Michael F. Dilley, Elite Warriors, (Ventura, California: Pathfinder Publishing,

means other than diplomacy, trade or open military force.<sup>54</sup> Vietnam provided the test bed for SOF in conjunction with the Central Intelligence Agency in functioning as America's "Third Option" regarding covert operations in support of U.S. interests.

During the post Vietnam era, SOF continued to execute missions in support of all major U.S. military operations (Operation Urgent Fury, Just Cause, Desert Storm, Restore Hope, Uphold Democracy) and literally thousands of minor operations in support of U.S. interests. Although SOF has continued to stress the importance of deception in both training and real world missions, with the notable exception of Operation Desert Storm, SOF has not functioned as a deception effort in support of large-scale, conventional operations. Regarding deception operations during Desert Storm, the Navy's Sea, Air and Land Commandos (SEALs), who trace their lineage to the Navy Frogmen and Underwater Demolitions Teams (UDT) of World War II were the primary SOF elements used to conduct the deception. Although primarily used to conduct direct action and special reconnaissance missions, the SEALs nonetheless, proved invaluable in deceiving the Iraqi forces as to the actual location of the Coalition's ground war invasion.<sup>55</sup> In fact, this highly successful deception operation clearly illustrated the potential of using SOF as a deception force in support of large-scale, conventional shaping, and decisive operations.

### **Contributing Factors to SOF's Exclusion as a Deception Shaping Force**

In addition to the conventional U.S. military being responsible for its overall decrease in conducting strategic or operational level deception operations, SOF also shares partial responsibility in limiting its likelihood of supporting conventional operations through the use of deception.

One of the historical contributing factors to this lack of interoperability is SOF's insistence on information compartmentalization in order to maintain operational security. SOF has operated in

---

1996) 198.

<sup>54</sup> Theodore Shackley, The Third Option, (New York: McGraw Book Company, 1981) 6.

<sup>55</sup> Walker, 184.

a compartmentalized fashion since World War II when the OSS executed many highly secretive missions in support of Allied forces.<sup>56</sup> SOF continued this compartmentalization in virtually all of its operations in the Korean as well as Vietnam conflict.

One of the most secretive missions of the Vietnam conflict involved a very complex rescue attempt of American prisoners of war in North Vietnam dubbed, “The Son Tay Raid”.<sup>57</sup> The raid is considered one of SOF’s finest hours with regard to the technical aspects of the operation, but an intelligence failure because the U.S. failed to detect indicators of the prisoners being moved from the raid site. The compartmentalization of the entire operation was deemed a success however, and further limited the potential of SOF interacting and supporting conventional operations on a more frequent basis.

The need for information compartmentalization was exercised again during the 1980 Operation, “Desert One” failed Iranian Hostage Rescue attempt that highlighted significant shortcomings in SOF’s ability to operate in a joint environment.<sup>58</sup> As a result of the failed effort in Iran, SOF formed a joint headquarters, U.S. Special Operations Command (USSOCOM), in order to improve interoperability as well as command and control for SOF. While this move did improve SOF’s joint interoperability, the intelligence compartmentalization continued.

Another example of SOF’s failure due in part to its dependency on intelligence and information compartmentalization occurred during 1993 Operation “Restore Hope” in Somalia. In the case of Somalia, the perceived need for information compartmentalization resulted in a lack of information coordination with United Nation’s conventional forces, including U.S. Army 10<sup>th</sup> Mountain Division, and severely hampered rescue efforts of SOF soldiers decisively engaged with enemy forces.

---

<sup>56</sup> Bank, p. 14

<sup>57</sup> Steven Emerson, Secret Warriors, (New York: G.P. Putnam’s Sons, 1988) 29.

<sup>58</sup> Emerson, 16.

However, recent events in Afghanistan have forced SOF operations to the forefront and as a consequence, removed much of the “cloak of secrecy” regarding many SOF missions in that theater. Operations that only a few years ago would have been classified secret are now broadcast daily to the world in order to chart the progress of coalition forces against terrorism. Units that have been historically secret are currently viewed on the nightly news working with indigenous resistance forces in order to defeat terrorist factions. In some instances, even casualties suffered from these secretive elite units are now broadcast via the mass media complete with detailed biographies and family photos. The amount and frequency of publicity many SOF operators are now routinely contending with does yet seem to be disrupting operations, however, SOF’s ability to permanently alter part of its culture regarding secrecy, could prove very challenging.

This recent trend in making SOF operations known to the general public may to some degree decrease operational security, but it will also undoubtedly improve relations and interoperability of SOF with conventional forces, both U.S. and Allied. This improved interoperability will then increase the likelihood of SOF executing deception in support of large-scale conventional shaping and decisive operations on a more frequent basis.

## **CHAPTER FOUR**

### **CONTEMPORARY DECEIVERS**

#### **World War II Deception (Operation Bodyguard)**

There have been some excellent examples of deception operations over the last sixty years by countries such as the United States, the Soviet Union, China and Vietnam. Although the U.S. has generally been reluctant to incorporate deception at anything higher than tactical level over the last five decades, it nonetheless used deception on multiple occasions with tremendous success during World War II at the operational level. The most successful of these deception operations was the Allied deception plan to protect the Normandy Invasion.



In early 1944, none of the Allies needed convincing that deception operations paid off.<sup>59</sup> The British and Soviets had used deception with great success throughout the course of the war. Franklin Delano Roosevelt (FDR), another proponent of deception, and according to some Air Force historians, the actual initial planner of the famed Doolittle Air Raid, fully embraced incorporating large-scale deception in support of war aims.<sup>60</sup> The success of U.S. deception at Midway orchestrated by Admiral Nimitz, and conducted to deceive the Japanese as to the location of U.S. carriers only reinforced FDR's belief in the potential of deception. The Allies belief in the potential for deception convinced them to embark on the most ambitious deception plan in the history of warfare, the plan to protect the Allied invasion of France in June of 1944.<sup>61</sup>

The deception plan, "Operation Bodyguard", was designed to reinforce Hitler's belief of where he was convinced the invasion would take place. The Allies decided to convince Hitler that land operations would begin in the spring of 1944 with an invasion of Norway. The British, American, and Soviet participants would then advance into Sweden, turn south into Denmark and enter Germany across the vulnerable plains of Schlwswig-Holstein. The main thrust would be the Balkans and would consist of an Allied invasion of Peloponnese, followed by an advance into Germany through the Ljubljana Gap. Simultaneously, the Soviets would attack Ploesti oil fields, denying Hitler a third of his fuel supplies. If an invasion of France were to come at all it would be subordinate and would be directed against the Pas de Calais. Additionally the Allies would have to convince Hitler that when the landings on the coast of Normandy occurred they were diversionary.<sup>62</sup> Intelligence played a critical factor in the overall success of the strategic and operational deception

---

<sup>59</sup> Dewar, 69.

<sup>60</sup> Eric Larrabee, Commander in Chief, (New York: Harper and Row Publishers, 1987) 365.

<sup>61</sup> Ibid.

<sup>62</sup> Mark Lloyd, The Art of Military Deception, (South Yorkshire, Great Britain: Pen and Sword Books, 1997) 91.

in confirming the preexisting beliefs of Hitler as well as indicating the future intentions of the Germans.<sup>63</sup>

The British success in breaking the *Abwehr* Enigma ciphers in 1941 provided the Allies the ability to conduct complex, strategic deception and facilitated the deception in support of the Normandy Invasion.<sup>64</sup> The detailed deciphering of German codes enabled British intelligence to continuously check and recheck the degree of success of its deception plans and then to modify them accordingly in order to make them even more effective.<sup>65</sup>

The scope of Operation Bodyguard was so large it was therefore subdivided into separate plans based on geographical areas. These plans were code named Fortitude, Zeppelins, Vendetta and Ironside (although Ironside was largely ineffectual due to lack of resources and poor weather).

Operation Fortitude was the deception plan designed to convince Hitler that a massive attack would be executed against the Pas de Calais as well as conducting an Allied landing in Norway. The plan was subdivided into Fortitude North and South. Fortitude North deception involved portraying the invasion of Norway as well as bringing neutral Sweden into the war on the side of the Allies and the subsequent invasion of North Germany through Denmark. The British successfully used false radio broadcasts, leaks to double agents, publicity in local and national newspapers, sporting events between non existing units, and even marriages between locals and service members to replicate two British Corps and its 4<sup>th</sup> Army stationed in Stirling and Dundee. The plan was so successful the Germans even attempted to bomb the fictitious location of the 4<sup>th</sup> Army's Headquarters.<sup>66</sup>

Fortitude South, the plan to convince the Germans the Allies would be invading the Pas de Calais, was equally as successful. General George Patton was put in command of the First United

---

<sup>63</sup> Dewar, 69

<sup>64</sup> Latimer, 126

<sup>65</sup> Gooch and Amos, 126.

<sup>66</sup> Ibid., 71.

States Army Group (FUSAG), stationed in Kent and East Anglia. To accomplish the deception, a large dummy fuel installation was constructed at Dover, large number of tanks, guns and vehicles were moved into the woods and fields of Kent and Essex and plywood landing craft were moored in every available bay and inlet along the southeast coast. News of the build-up was fed by agents, both real and turned, and supported by radio traffic. The Germans were completely fooled by this ruse as well. They retrained their 15<sup>th</sup> Army at the Pas de Calais and by the time the 15<sup>th</sup> Army was committed against the true Ally invasion, it was too late. The Allies had broken out and were across the Seine.<sup>67</sup>

Operation Zeppelin was designed to prevent the transfer of Axis troops from the eastern Mediterranean to northern France. The plan involved fabricating the threat of a soviet attack against Bulgaria and Romania supported by a British attack through Greece and culminating in a campaign in Austria and a breakout into southern Germany and Central Europe fictitious army divisions were moved to North Africa and the eastern Mediterranean and fake invasion dates set. The plan was so successful, the Germans did not move one division from the Mediterranean theater in time to influence the true Allied Invasion during the first few weeks.<sup>68</sup>

The intent for Operation Vendeta was to maximize the number of German troops committed to southern France. The French 1<sup>st</sup> Army and U.S. 91<sup>st</sup> Infantry Division were employed as the threat in this case and were successful in Hitler retaining a number of units to include the battle hardened Das Reich SS division in the south until too late to influence the actual invasion to the north.<sup>69</sup>

World War II showcased the potential of implementing centralized planned deception operations focused at key decision makers (Hitler) and highlighted the success these well thought out, imaginative, and economy of force operations could generate. Special Operations Forces also

---

<sup>67</sup> Lloyd, 93.

<sup>68</sup> Ibid., 94.

contributed (albeit in a small manner) through Resistance forces to the overall deception effort. Unfortunately, however, despite the commitment to deception that General Eisenhower espoused, the U.S. discarded deception operations shortly after World War II. Additionally, while the OSS practiced deception operations as a matter of routine in supporting their own operations in the European and Pacific theaters, their talents at conducting deception operations were never fully integrated as a major shaping operation for a large scale conventional decisive operation.

## **Korea**

Although the U.S. executed limited deception in Korea during the landing at Inchon, the prevailing thought once again was that American forces would rely on superior firepower and maneuver to win the conflict. Another contributor to the decline of deception operations was the advent of nuclear weapons. American Special Operators, however, continued to practice the art of deception during the conflict as a matter of survival. The United Nations Special Operations consisted of the United Nations Partisan Infantry Korea (UNPIK) special operators who operated from the clandestine camp on the island of Paengnyong-do off the western coast of North Korea. Similar to World War II, these Guerrilla forces were used to attack enemy weak points, disrupt lines of communication, and gather intelligence, but were not incorporated as part of a large scale deception effort in support of conventional forces.<sup>70</sup> Unfortunately, however, the Americans would learn that although they all but discontinued the art of deception, their enemies would do just the opposite. The Americans fell victim to a brilliant, yet simple deception plan conducted by the Chinese.<sup>71</sup>

The Chinese Volunteers used deception to cover their movement south and achieve surprise against UN forces in the late autumn of 1950. One Chinese Army deployed from Autung,

---

<sup>69</sup> Ibid.

<sup>70</sup> Malcom, 43.

<sup>71</sup> Nelson, 19.

Manchuria to its assembly areas in North Korea almost three hundred miles away.<sup>72</sup> The Chinese units only marched at night and remained hidden during the day. They relied on small scouting parties during the day to reconnoiter the following nights march and enforced strict noise, movement, and camouflage discipline during daylight hours conceal their locations. U.N. forces were conducting a general pursuit of the defeated North Koreans and missed the indicators of the Chinese Volunteers massing their Army. Overconfidence in the capabilities, without ample consideration of potential limitations of the United Nation's air surveillance also reinforced the deception effort of the Chinese. The resulting surprise attack of the Chinese Army against the unsuspecting UN soldiers forced the U.S. Army to painfully relearn the value of deception.<sup>73</sup>

## **Vietnam**

The American involvement in Vietnam saw little improvement with regard to implementing deception at the operational or strategic level. Although some American units did, in fact, execute rudimentary deception at the tactical level, Americans once again relied instead on superior firepower and technology to win its battles.<sup>74</sup> The North Vietnamese, by contrast, used deception to devastating effect at the tactical and operational level.

At the tactical level, a common practice of the North Vietnamese was to ambush a small South Vietnamese or U.S. unit in order to lure larger relief forces into a bigger ambush. This technique proved highly successful initially for the enemy. At the Operational level, the largest deception operation the North executed was during the Tet Festival. Deception would be a key ingredient to achieving surprise for the North in an all-out offensive throughout South Vietnam during the Tet Festival. To accomplish this, the North Vietnamese leaked information that it would use the time of Tet to talk of peace negotiations through diplomatic channels. Tet was traditionally a

---

<sup>72</sup> Ibid., 20

<sup>73</sup> Ibid.

<sup>74</sup> Latimer, 286.

time of peace for the Vietnamese and the Americans considered it a weakness in their foe and bought into the peace overtures. The North also planned to conduct diversionary attacks on the borders against Dak To and Khe Sahn. These attacks were planned to draw American attention and away from their true targets, many of the country's heavily populated centers. When the North conducted its main attack it achieved overwhelming surprise. The American military and government had been assuring the public that the war was all but won in late 1967, however, the reaction to Tet, particularly the penetration of the U.S. Embassy in Saigon by enemy commandos had a devastating effect on U.S. morale and the outcome of the war.<sup>75</sup> Deception was an integral part of the overall success of the strategic defeat of the world's most powerful nation.<sup>76</sup>

## **Soviet Deception**

*Fine Words are a Mask to cover Shady Deeds*  
-Josef Stalin

There is probably no other country that has used deception at every level, throughout the full spectrum of conflict, as often, and arguably as successfully as the former Soviet Union. The Soviets use the term *Maskirovka* as their definition of deception. *Maskirovka* formed the very bedrock of Soviet military practice and is still an important tenet in Russian military thought.<sup>77</sup>

The Soviets insist on an integrated and centralized approach to deception from the strategic through the tactical levels of war.<sup>78</sup> The necessity of preventing a surprise enemy attack on the Soviet Union, and at the same time achieving a surprise attack on the enemy are central themes in Soviet military literature of the 1960s and 1970s.<sup>79</sup> The Soviets learned a hard lesson about the effects of suffering surprise at the hands of the enemy during Operation Barbarosa and determined

---

<sup>75</sup> Ibid., 290.

<sup>76</sup> Ibid.

<sup>77</sup> Lloyd, 115.

<sup>78</sup> David A. Charters and Maurice A.J. Tugwell, Deception Operations: Studies in the East-West Context, (Oxford, England: Brassey's Publishing, 1990) 141.

<sup>79</sup> Ibid.

that they would never again be caught unprepared.<sup>80</sup> The Soviets therefore view surprise as one of the foremost principles of military art and have either used or have planned to use deception as part of their key enablers in achieving surprise for both large scale conventional as well as nuclear war.<sup>81</sup>

The Soviets used deception with significant results throughout the Great Patriotic War. One of the major deception operations, Operation Bagration targeted the German Army Group Center and involved a theater-wide deception plan. The Operation was launched just over two weeks after D-Day, on the third anniversary of the German invasion of the Soviet Union, 22 June 1944.<sup>82</sup> By the close, some two months later, Germany had suffered its most crushing defeat of the war-the complete destruction of Army Group Center, involving the loss of some 350,000 German soldiers.<sup>83</sup>

The Soviet's deception plan directly targeted the strategic assessment shop of the German Foreign Armies East with the intent of portraying offensive preparations against the northern and or southern portion of German lines, rather than in the center. The Russian high command dictated that Fronts to the south would simulate concentrations of divisions on the scale of eight to nine divisions per Front.<sup>84</sup> They directed the Fronts use real antiaircraft guns and combat air patrols to defend dummy tanks and artillery. Additionally, the Fronts were to verify their deception by using reconnaissance aircraft and aerial photographs.<sup>85</sup>

While simulating concentrations in the north and south, the Soviets sought to hide the redeployment of forces to the center. As forces departed assembly areas they created false concentration areas to portray continuous presence.<sup>86</sup> Examples included one Front (the equivalent of one U.S. Army group) created five concentration areas for tanks, twelve for artillery, seventeen

---

<sup>80</sup> Lloyd, 121.

<sup>81</sup> Charters and Tugwell, 141.

<sup>82</sup> Latimer, 239.

<sup>83</sup> Ibid.

<sup>84</sup> Butts., 27.

<sup>85</sup> Ibid.

<sup>86</sup> Ibid.

fake fuel dumps, and twelve false ammunition points. In addition to the false sites, the Soviets broadcast engine noise and imitated the units' radio nets.<sup>87</sup> Real forces concentrating against the center moved mostly at night in order to avoid detection. Arriving units were prohibited from aerial reconnaissance missions over German forces and their radios were sealed to prevent their use.<sup>88</sup> In order to protect the value of ground targets, units were prohibited from mass firing against German reconnaissance aircraft. In sectors where units were to attack they built field fortifications with false minefields to portray preparations for a defense.<sup>89</sup>

The Soviets committed entire real Armies to the deception plan to improve its credibility. Three tank armies were moved to the south to draw German attention from the center. The Russian tank armies used the German collection network to their advantage and the German agent network reported their movements resulting in German forces reacting to their own detriment.<sup>90</sup>

The effects of the Soviet deception were decisive. They achieved their goal of convincing the German Intelligence that the offensive would be against either the northern or southern part of the front.<sup>91</sup> The German high command reacted even better than expected; prior to the Soviet offensive Hitler ordered all available mobile reserves to either the northern or southern part of the front. The Soviets understood the value of extensive deception plans conducted over time and spent months executing deception measures for Operation Bagration. They counted on the vulnerabilities of Foreign Armies East to deception and Hitler's over-controlling of field forces. Local commanders did not have the flexibility to react to tactical intelligence in a timely fashion.<sup>92</sup> Although forward German commanders actually detected the build-up of forces, Hitler was already convinced that the main attack would occur against the north or south, not against the center.<sup>93</sup>

---

<sup>87</sup> Ibid.

<sup>88</sup> Ibid.

<sup>89</sup> Ibid.

<sup>90</sup> Ibid., 28.

<sup>91</sup> Ibid.

<sup>92</sup> Ibid.

<sup>93</sup> Ibid.



Another example of large-scale Soviet deception occurred in the preparation of the Manchurian Campaign in 1945, which allowed the Soviets to achieve strategic surprise over the Japanese. Stalin had promised at the February 1945 Yalta Conference to assist the Allies in the war against Japan within three months of the surrender of Germany, but in fact, had intended to attack into Manchuria in late summer-early autumn 1945 to clear the Japanese from the area prior to the onset of winter.<sup>94</sup> However, Stalin's hand was forced due to the atomic bombing of Hiroshima on 6 August and as a consequence, the Soviets crossed the Manchurian border on 9 August, achieving total surprise over the Japanese.<sup>95</sup>

Preparations for the campaign actually began in late 1944, and from December 1944 through July 1945, the Soviets shipped two military fronts, two field armies, one tank army and supporting war material from Europe via the Trans-Siberian railroad to the Manchurian border.<sup>96</sup> By August, the Soviets established a Far East Command complete with 1.6 million personnel, 27,000 guns and mortars, 1,200 multiple rocket launchers, 5,600 tanks, and self-propelled guns, 3,700 aircraft and 86,000 vehicles along a 5,000-kilometer front against the Japanese.<sup>97</sup> The Soviets were also able to conceal supplies provided by the U.S. that crossed the Pacific.

The Kwantung Army was taken completely by surprise. Although it occupied good defensive positions it had not expected to fight and was not fully manned. Many of its best troops had been transferred to other theaters, all but six of its remaining divisions were manned with newer troops and some of its units were down to fifteen percent.<sup>98</sup> The Soviets ability to integrate deception and subsequently achieve virtually total surprise over the Japanese had a lasting effect on the potential for deception for Russian military theorist and planners.

---

<sup>94</sup> Lloyd, 121

<sup>95</sup> Ibid.

<sup>96</sup> Ibid.

<sup>97</sup> Ibid.

<sup>98</sup> Ibid.

Soviet deception was again used to devastating effect during the suppression of a liberal reform movement in Czechoslovakia in 1968. The new Secretary for the Czechoslovakian Communist Party initiated a series of reform policies, which the Kremlin finally found unacceptable.<sup>99</sup> The Soviet leadership responded with a military build-up and training around Czechoslovakia in order to put psychological pressure on Czechoslovakian leaders as well as mask a large logistical build up and serve as a rehearsal for a potential invasion.<sup>100</sup> Military maneuvers, as recognized repeatedly by soviet military writers, can serve as a useful form of deception. Thus, in a broad sense, the long military exercises lasting from May through August along the Czechoslovakian borders were used as a vehicle for deception and actually desensitized Czech leaders to the possibility of a military invasion.<sup>101</sup> Although American and NATO long-range radar surveillance did pick up indications of actual Soviet invasion preparations, these events were simply viewed as an extension of the extended maneuvers. Soviet *Spetsnaz* infiltrated and set the conditions for follow on Airborne forces on 20 August backed by Tank and mechanized forces. The invasion force quickly moved to seize the Presidential Palace, radio and television stations, all of the main railway stations and bridges across the River Vltva. All were under Soviet control by the morning of 21 August.<sup>102</sup>

The Soviets again used deception in a large-scale capacity during their invasion of Afghanistan in 1979. The aim of the invasion was to establish a new government in Kabul, loyal to the Soviets. The president of Afghanistan at the time was Nur M. Taraki who had come to power in a military coup in April 1978, which was supported by the Soviets.<sup>103</sup> Taraki announced sweeping programs of land distribution, emancipation of women, and the destruction of the old Afghanistan social structure. The new government was immediately challenged by armed resistance and also had

---

<sup>99</sup> Ibid., 126.

<sup>100</sup> Charters and Tugwell, 145.

<sup>101</sup> Ibid., 146.

<sup>102</sup> Lloyd, 127.

<sup>103</sup> Lester Grau, The Takedown of Kabul: "An Effective Coup de Main" 1.

to contend with much of the military deserting, culminating with a revolt in the city of Herat in March, 1979.<sup>104</sup>

In September 1979, Taraki's Prime Minister, Hafizullah Amin, seized power and secretly executed Taraki.<sup>105</sup> Amin led the Soviets to believe that Taraki was alive long after he was killed, but his leadership proved no better than Taraki's and the Soviet Union watched the new communist state spin out of control and out of Moscow's orbit.<sup>106</sup> The Soviet Politburo moved to stabilize the situation against the unsuspecting President.

The actual invasion took place over the Christmas period (24-26 December 1979) when an immediate Western condemnation would be difficult to orchestrate.<sup>107</sup> Its effect was superb in that it achieved its intended sluggish reaction from the West.<sup>108</sup> The Soviets used a similar template to one used in the Czechoslovakian invasion. They depended on their in-country KGB elements to disarm or disable key nodes of the national military forces. A General Staff group would tour the country in advance of the invasion, under some pretense, in order to assess and fine-tune invasion plans.<sup>109</sup> Airborne and *Spetsnaz* forces would spearhead the invasion and seize major airfields, transportation choke points, the capitol city, key government buildings, and communications facilities. They would also seize key government leaders. Follow-on Soviet ground forces would then cross into the country, seize the major cities and road network, suppress any local military resistance, and occupy the key population centers. A new government would then be installed, supported and recognized by the Soviets and its satellites.<sup>110</sup>

The Soviets performed detailed reconnaissance prior to the invasion, inserting

---

<sup>104</sup> Ibid.

<sup>105</sup> Ibid.

<sup>106</sup> Ibid.

<sup>107</sup> Dewar, 88.

<sup>108</sup> Ibid.

<sup>109</sup> Grau, 1.

<sup>110</sup> Ibid.

Spetsnaz in Afghan uniforms, who were even incorporated into the presidential security forces, responsible guarding the outer perimeter of the Amin's residence.<sup>111</sup> Additionally, Soviet advisors actually managed to disarm two Afghan divisions by persuading their commanders that their anti-tank weapons and ammunition needed to be checked and accounted for and that some of their tanks should be withdrawn for a part to be replaced. As in Czechoslovakia, the vanguard of the invasion was ten thousand airborne troops who flew into Kabul airport, immediately occupying all vital facilities. Within days, the Soviets had deployed between eighty and a hundred thousand troops in Afghanistan.<sup>112</sup> President Amin, deceived almost to end regarding the true intentions of the Soviets, was killed during the assault on the Presidential Palace and a new President, Babrak Karma, a Soviet loyalist, was installed.<sup>113</sup>

The emphasis the Russians place on the art of deception cannot be overstated. The Russians view deception extremely important in ensuring the viability of the attack and is a part of planning as matter of routine. The Russian officer is held accountable by regulations to employ some form of deception to facilitate his attack, and the regulations are enforced through harsh discipline.<sup>114</sup> Unlike their American counterparts, the long centuries of living in an autocracy have made the Russians very resourceful and devious, and deception comes naturally to them - a fact that is all too frequently forgotten.<sup>115</sup>

## **Yom Kippur War**

The Egyptians used deception to great effect against the Israelis during the 1973 Yom Kippur War.<sup>116</sup> Planning for the 1973 war began the day the 1967 war ended in Egypt's defeat. Anwar Sadat, upon becoming Egyptian President, decided the Arab victory in the next war would

---

<sup>111</sup> Ibid.

<sup>112</sup> Dewar, 88

<sup>113</sup> Grau, 21.

<sup>114</sup> Dewar, 113.

<sup>115</sup> Ibid.

<sup>116</sup> Phillip S. Thompson, "U.S. Army Deception Planning at the Operational Level of War" (Monograph:

depend on a major deception operation.<sup>117</sup> Sadat constantly kept the Israelis on their toes by mobilizing reserves, moving troops to the canal, undertaking various engineer works in preparation for a crossing and working the population up into a war frenzy with a succession of speeches indicating imminent confrontation.<sup>118</sup> Initially, the Israelis mobilized for each exercise. This soon became impractical since most of the Israeli military is reserve and mobilization effectively shut down their economy.<sup>119</sup> Additionally, Israel became convinced the Egyptian exercises were nothing more than training events designed to goad the Israelis into useless mobilizations.<sup>120</sup> In late September, Israeli intelligence detected a sizeable Syrian build-up of troops in the border area, but concluded that the preparations were defensive.<sup>121</sup> At the same time, Egyptian troop movements were assumed to be part of the annual September maneuvers which had taken place regularly for many years.<sup>122</sup> Unknown to the Israelis, the Egyptians left some troops and equipment behind after every exercise. The Egyptian Army massed for an attack under the eyes of the Israeli forces, but the Israelis did not believe the evidence.<sup>123</sup>

The Egyptians correctly targeted Israeli Prime Minister Golda Meir as the decision maker. She received reassuring information from the director of Military Intelligence (DMI) and from Defense Minister Moyshe Dayan, the hero of the 1967 war.<sup>124</sup> The Egyptians also took advantage of the Israeli superiority complex and fed that attitude to the point of Israeli overconfidence.<sup>125</sup> All of the indicators for war were present, yet the Israeli government discounted them and continued to consider the Egyptians incapable of crossing the Suez. When the Egyptians did, in fact, attack in

---

School for Advanced Military Studies, Command and General Staff College, AY 90-91) 20.

<sup>117</sup> Ibid.

<sup>118</sup> Dewar, 116.

<sup>119</sup> Thompson, 21.

<sup>120</sup> Ibid.

<sup>121</sup> Dewar, 116.

<sup>122</sup> Ibid.

<sup>123</sup> Thompson, 21.

<sup>124</sup> Ibid.

<sup>125</sup> Ibid.

October 1973, they, achieved total surprise over the Israelis.<sup>126</sup> The Israeli defenses were on the Suez Canal were breeched and a substantial bridgehead established to the west of the canal. The scale of the initial Egyptian success surprised even the Egyptians.<sup>127</sup>

## **Deception in the Gulf War**

The one example in contemporary history where the U.S. military used Special Operations Forces in a deception effort in direct support of large-scale conventional operations occurred during the initiation of the Ground War in the Gulf War. As the ground offensive neared, tactical reconnaissance confirmed that the Iraqi Army had its right flank exposed to the west of Kuwait.<sup>128</sup> SOF was used in conjunction with elements of the 1<sup>st</sup> Cavalry Division as a shaping force in order to deceive the Iraqi defenders regarding the location of Coalition force's main attack. SOF's mission (the NAVY SEALS) was to reinforce what the Iraqi's already believed which was that Coalition forces would conduct an amphibious assault in the area of Mina Saud to initiate the ground offensive.<sup>129</sup> This inclusion proved extremely beneficial for Coalition forces and serves as an excellent example of how SOF can augment the conventional military in the art of deception through their highly specialized training, special equipment, use of weapons, and as important, their very imaginative methods of conducting deception. It also serves as a superb example of the potential of using an extreme economy of force element to execute a highly specialized deception operation. This is noteworthy in that at least theoretically, using only a fraction of the number of soldiers to conduct the deception as opposed to the original number as proposed by the Marines probably accounted for saving the lives many Marines who would have come ashore.

The original deception plan called for Marine forces and elements of the 1<sup>st</sup> Cavalry Division to be used as an amphibious assault force on the eastern coast of Kuwait while the majority

---

<sup>126</sup> Ibid.

<sup>127</sup> Dewar, 116.

<sup>128</sup> FM 3-0, 11-5.

<sup>129</sup> Waller, 324.

of Army units attacked deep into Kuwait. The Marines were intent on performing this mission in part because they had not conducted a full scale amphibious assault since Inchon in the Korean War, and partly because amphibious operations were what clearly differentiated the Marine Corps from the Army<sup>130</sup>. Navy SEALs were tasked early with conducting several reconnaissance missions in order to gather intelligence on potential beaches to accommodate the amphibious assault. Satellite imagery and over-flights assisted greatly with confirming or denying potential landing sites, but the Marines required the highly specialized skills of the SEALs in order to provide greater details on selected beaches. The original intent in using the SEALs was to only perform Special Reconnaissance in support of the Marines, provide detailed intelligence on the gradient and firmness of the sand of potential landing sites, coastal gun emplacements, enemy bunkers, obstacles, and vehicle movements and troop concentrations.<sup>131</sup>

The complexity of these reconnaissance missions proved extremely challenging for SOF planners. The coast was full of mines, the chance of compromise great, and the potential of fratricide for the SEALs extremely high. SEAL planners not only established friendly no fire zones to protect the SEALs, but also had to cable, telephone the day prior, and hand deliver the same message to the Saudi Navy the day of each mission. Even with these detailed measures in effect, SEALs failed to escape the “fog of war” and were fired upon on one occasion by a U.S. Navy patrol boat.<sup>132</sup>

Some of the techniques the SEALs used in gathering intelligence included; paddling rubber rafts to within 200 meters of shore under night vision devices and swimming even closer to obtain better details of objectives. Even in the best diving dry suits, the fifty-four degree water temperature proved challenging to SEALs laying in the shallows collecting intelligence. The Iraqis exercised very poor light discipline, routinely leaving doors to command posts open and assisted the SEALs greatly in accomplishing their missions. Upon their return to their boats, the SEALs used pocket

---

<sup>130</sup> Ibid., 328.

<sup>131</sup> Ibid. 327.

tape recorders to later record all that they saw. The intelligence the SEALs provided indicated the beaches were simply too risky for a conventional assault. Prospective beaches were simply too well defended and contained too many mines and obstacles. The intelligence confirmed what the Central command had already suspected. The Kuwaiti coastline was too heavily defended and an amphibious landing was not worth the casualties the Marines would suffer.<sup>133</sup> Even the Navy balked at steaming its amphibious ships into the mine-strewn waters off the coast.<sup>134</sup> To the protest of the Marines, the large-scale amphibious assault plan was terminated. The Marines would join Saudi divisions on land in breaching defenses in southeastern Kuwait and then attacking north to Kuwait city. The only Americans allowed near the Kuwaiti shore line would be fifteen SEALs who would launch a deception effort in support of both the Marines and Army operations.

The SEALs deception effort would involve conducting an amphibious assault simulating the Marine landing along the eastern coast of Kuwait. Adding to the deception were elements of the Army's 1<sup>st</sup> Cavalry division tasked with executing a feint along the Kuwait and Iraqi border. The intent of the joint deception operation was to create deception regarding the location of the Coalition's main effort.<sup>135</sup>

To add credibility to the deception plan, Central Command purposefully fanned press speculation about the amphibious invasion. Navy officials leaked details about amphibious ship exercises in the northern gulf that normally would have been deemed sensitive. So successful was the deception credibility prior to the initiation of the Ground war that on 1 February *Newsweek* magazine carried a featured article on an amphibious assault.<sup>136</sup>

The fifteen-man SEAL platoon executed their feigned amphibious assault at 0100 on 24 February 1991. Their mission was to place twenty-one pound charges along a 200 meter stretch of

---

<sup>132</sup> Ibid. 327.

<sup>133</sup> Ibid., 328.

<sup>134</sup> Ibid.

<sup>135</sup> Walker, 185.

<sup>136</sup> Latimer, 301.



beach on the southern coast of Kuwait to facilitate the deception effort. The beach was heavily mined, barbwire ran its entire length, and was constantly patrolled by the enemy defenders. The defense also included Iraqi bunkers that were positioned along a well-established trench line.<sup>137</sup>

The assault force of SEALs included a six man element that carried haversack packed with twenty pounds of C-4 explosives and two timers to detonate the charge. The SEALs swam to approximately six-foot depth and then slowly swam, walked, and crawled the remaining distance to their prescribed demolition fixing point in only two feet of water. The preset charges were then fixed with the SEALs even factoring in the water temperature and its effect on the charge's clocking mechanism. The fifty three degree water temperature would cause a thirteen minute delay on the charges which prompted the SEALs to initiate the charges at 1047 hours in order to ensure detonation at 0100 hours. The SEALs then made their way back to their rubber raiding craft 500 meters off shore and subsequently rendezvoused with two of four supporting speedboats from the special boat unit tasked with assisting the SEALs. To add to the deception, other members of the fifteen man SEAL element were tasked with establishing two large channel buoys, two hundred and fifty feet apart to portray markers for the Marine's amphibious assault. Following the execution of these deception efforts the SEAL platoon then rendezvoused with two of the supporting speed boats and ex-filtrated, while two other speed boats remained on station for the last portion of the deception mission. One of the speedboats then raced toward the shoreline, firing its .50-caliber machine gun and M-19 40 millimeter grenade launcher for five minutes to portray the initiation of the ground offensive.<sup>138</sup> Allied aircraft also bombed the Iraqi defenses in support of the deception effort.

At 0100, the demolition charges began detonating. The combination of the heavy machine-gun and grenade fire, small charges detonating in shallow water and the sight of the bright orange buoys could not help but leave the impression in the minds of the Iraqi defenders that Mina Saud

---

<sup>137</sup> Walker, 185.

<sup>138</sup> Ibid., 185.

was the intended site for an amphibious assault.<sup>139</sup> The effect was overwhelming. Not only did the guns of the coastal defenders remain pointed to the south, but elements of two Iraqi divisions were diverted east to Mina Saud.<sup>140</sup>

The deception at Mina Saud illustrates the potential of employing SOF in a deception effort in support of large-scale, shaping and decisive operations. The nature of the deception required the specialized skills, training, and equipment SOF possesses and showcased the talents of these exceptional warriors. Additionally, SOF was successful at executing an economy of force shaping operation that originally called for a much larger Marine force that arguably may have cost many U.S. lives. The overwhelming success of this deception operation serves as a hallmark example of how to integrate SOF as a deception element effort in support of large scale conventional operations and its effect in truly deceiving the enemy should not be lost on U.S. military planners in the future.

## **CHAPTER FIVE**

### **CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS**

#### **Conclusions**

The U.S. military, left to its own device, will continue to depend on overwhelming firepower, maneuver, and technology to win its wars. Deception will continue to be a part of U.S. military doctrine, but will rarely, if ever, be implemented above the tactical level. Indeed, U.S. doctrine will continue to call for deception, but that call will only fall on deaf ears.<sup>141</sup> Part of the reason for the U.S. not using deception is that deception is deemed simply too difficult to plan, orchestrate, and execute from the strategic through the tactical level. It would involve teaching U.S. leaders to think in terms of how to influence the enemy's decision cycle and force him to actually make mistakes, a task that requires a good imagination. Some will naturally show a greater talent for

---

<sup>139</sup> Waller., 333.

<sup>140</sup> Ibid., 334.

it than others, but this talent can only be encouraged by allowing as much lateral thinking as possible into plans and training, which all too often are structured and formulaic.<sup>142</sup>

Likewise, U.S. military institutions of higher learning will preach the merits of thinking and fighting asymmetrically while simultaneously espousing the virtues of planning for the ever-elusive one decisive battle that decides the fate of wars. Deception will thus be relegated to an afterthought during post-missions and after actions reviews, but forgotten just as quickly during the next opportunity for implementation. U.S. conventional wisdom in favor of overwhelming the threat with the effects of firepower, technology and maneuver will forget the lessons on the potential of large-scale deception demonstrated during World War II and the Gulf War. The detailed intelligence required for a coordinated deception plan as well as the risk of failure associated with compromised deception will remain too daunting for most commanders.

U.S. Special Operations Forces will add to the deception dilemma by continuing its attempt to operate in a compartmentalized manner and distinct from conventional forces whenever possible. The intelligence barrier between the conventional military and SOF that is so crucial to deception operations will remain as impenetrable as ever.

Another contributing factor to SOF's exclusion from working more frequently with conventional forces is SOF's lackluster effort in attempting to educate conventional forces on the capabilities and limitations of SOF. The conventional military, therefore, will continue to only incorporate SOF in the traditional shaping roles it understands such as; special reconnaissance, some direct action, and coalition support. The more nebulous consideration of using SOF as a supporting deception effort will remain too confounding for many in the U.S. military to risk employing. The self perceived necessity of SOF to maintain a higher level of operational security, compartmentalization, and few operations in direct support of U.S. conventional forces as well as

---

<sup>141</sup> Nelson, 36.

<sup>142</sup> Latimer, 305.

the U.S. conventional military's failure to truly understand the capabilities of SOF will ensure the interoperability of these forces and the potential to use SOF in a supporting deception role makes only marginal improvements at best. The history of both of these forces over the last sixty years confirms this.

Fortunately, however, the U.S. military will not be left to its own device regarding the incorporation of more deception in the future. U.S. conventional military leaders will be required to incorporate SOF on a more frequent basis and will also be compelled to think more creatively in terms of winning the Nation's wars. SOF will also be required to rethink how it traditionally supports conventional military operations and will have to take a harder look at what truly needs to be highly classified and compartmentalized as opposed to what is simply sensitive information. Additionally, SOF will be required to conduct much more extensive education on its own capabilities directed at conventional military leaders as a result of SOF working with conventional forces on a much expanded basis. Because the U.S. conventional military will be forced to be more creative in their approach to warfare and because the interoperability between SOF and conventional forces will dramatically improve, the art of deception will undoubtedly be included as a key enabler and combat multiplier for the U.S. There are primarily two events that are currently shaping these factors that will necessitate the inclusion of deception in future warfare. The first is the U.S. Army's ongoing transition from its older "Legacy Force" to its future "Objective Force" and the second reason is a result of the terrorist attack against the U.S. conducted on 11 September 2002.

### The Objective Force

According to a recent U.S. Army "White Paper" on the Concept for the Objective Force, the Army is attempting to transform the Army from a essentially heavy and unresponsive force to a highly deployable, responsive, and more lethal force. The White Paper states the Objective Force is

a full spectrum force: organized, manned, equipped and trained to be more strategically responsive, deployable, agile, versatile, lethal, survivable and sustainable across the entire spectrum of military operations from Major Theater Wars through counter terrorism to homeland security.<sup>143</sup> The Concept Paper further states that Objective Force units will conduct operational maneuver from strategic distances, creating diverse manifold dilemmas for U.S. adversaries by arriving at multiple points of entry, improved and unimproved. As necessary, Objective Force units conduct forcible entry, overwhelm aggressor anti-access capabilities, and rapidly impose its will on opponents.<sup>144</sup> Furthermore, Objective Force units will arrive immediately capable of conducting simultaneous, distributed and continuous combined arms, air-ground operations, day and night in open, close, complex, and all other terrain conditions throughout the battlespace.<sup>145</sup> U.S. Army units conducting joint and combined operations will see first, understand first, act first and finish decisively at the strategic, operational, and tactical levels of war.<sup>146</sup>

In the U.S. Army's attempt to transform itself in order to dominate land operations and provide the decisive complement to air, sea, and space operations, it will be forced to do more with less. The U.S. military, in fact, will be required to increase its already high operations tempo in order to meet the challenges of future, full-spectrum operations. As a consequence, the U.S. military will be required to operate simultaneously in more remote locations than ever before to counter asymmetrical threats including trans-national terrorist threats and alliances, North Korea, Iran, and Iraq. The U.S. military will become much more dependent on SOF as an enabler in shaping the environment prior to the commitment of conventional forces because the U.S. military will simply be required to do much more with potentially much less in terms of equipment and manpower. Military planners will be forced to rethink how, in fact, to actually conduct true asymmetric warfare

---

<sup>143</sup> Department of the Army, United States Army White Paper, "Concepts for the Objective Force", (Washington D.C: Office of the chief of Staff of the Army, 2001) iv.

<sup>144</sup> Ibid.

<sup>145</sup> Ibid.

<sup>146</sup> Ibid.

when conceivably, the U.S. may not have the luxury of depending on its superior maneuver, firepower, and technology to win its battles, engagements, campaigns, and wars. The U.S. will then be required to consider incorporating the lost art of deception as an enabler in defeating these challenges posed by a threat who will no longer allow the U.S. the opportunity to build up combat power for several months as in Operation Desert Shield. A highly adaptive threat who fully understands the potential of asymmetric warfare and the value of deception and will exploit it strategically, operationally, and tactically against the U.S.

In meeting the threat challenge, the U.S. military will be required to execute economy of force missions on a routine basis and deception operations will play a large role in the execution of those missions. SOF will become the primary method of choice in deception shaping operations due to their extensive experience with deception, low signature, specialized methods of insertion and extraction, highly honed warrior skills, cultural and linguistic capabilities, as well as their overall chance of success. The very characteristics that differentiated and occasionally alienated SOF from its conventional brethren will in the future be exploited fully due primarily to a lack of resources for the U.S. military. The potential and capabilities and limitations of SOF will then become common knowledge within the entire military as opposed to the ambiguity that currently exist, and SOF will dominate as an economy of force in full spectrum shaping operations to include deception operations in support of conventional decisive operations.

### America's War on Terrorism

The recent terrorists attacks on September 11, 2002, against the U.S. has also impacted the way the U.S. military will approach future warfare. The U.S. is currently engaged in a global war on terrorism and intends to fight it with all of the national instruments of power and throughout the strategic, operational, and tactical levels of war as well as through the use of coalition and allied members. The war on terrorism has thus far been conducted with a relative economy of force,

primarily being waged through air power and Special Operations Forces in Afghanistan. Many of the once highly secretive missions of SOF are now broadcast daily through television, radio, and the print media to a world audience who follows with great anticipation the missions of these elite warriors. Special operators are now televised working with Resistance forces, searching Taliban hideouts with accompanying media representatives, and even filmed assaulting enemy urban centers with Afghan counterparts. As a byproduct of the incredible amount of information available on the formerly mysterious Special Operations Forces, both the conventional military as well as the general public have a much better understanding of how SOF actually operates, including their capabilities and limitations. The success of the majority of these SOF missions and a new understanding and awareness that currently exist on how SOF can support conventional military operations has assured SOF a much greater role in America's future. Furthermore, the fact that the U.S. is determined to wage a global campaign against terrorism and the potential for increased deployments for the U.S. military is impending; SOF will undoubtedly continue to shape the various theaters through economy of force missions to include deception operations in support of conventional forces.

## **Recommendations**

The U.S. military must improve its use of deception. Although most in the military think they know what deception is, few are actually familiar with its overall potential and practical application<sup>147</sup>. In order for SOF and the conventional military to achieve better interoperability and realize the potential of using SOF as a deception force in support of conventional operations, the U.S. military should consider implementing the following measures:

- Expand its current doctrine to include more than two paragraphs in one of its capstone documents; FM 3.0 in order to emphasize the importance and potential of deception operations.

---

<sup>147</sup> Butts, 44.

Link this doctrine to the future Objective Force and indicate how deception operations can facilitate victory while simultaneously conserving lives, material and equipment.

- Study the theory and relevant history of deception operations throughout appropriate U.S. military academic institutions.
- Conduct a comprehensive review for implementation of opposing forces deception techniques demonstrated at the National training Center at Fort Irwin, California and the Joint Readiness Training Center at Fort Polk, Louisiana, as well as the World Class Opposing Force from Fort Leavenworth, Kansas.<sup>148</sup>
- Integrate deception planning operations routinely at all relevant U.S. military academic institutions.
- Stress the importance of commanders at all levels considering deception as part of an economy of force operation in order to facilitate victory, conserve lives, equipment and material and hold accountable through efficiency reports.
- Provide specialized deception training for officers serving in the Information Operational field and ensure these individuals serve as part of a plans section to ensure commanders have qualified individuals who can advise them on deception plans.<sup>149</sup>
- Include more course study on Special Operations Forces as part of the curriculum of all relevant U.S. military academic institutions.
- Incorporate more training at the respective U.S. military's Joint and Combined Arms Training Centers that focuses on the contemporary operating environment and stresses the importance of deception and the inclusion of SOF as a shaping force.
- Devote at least one full exercise that focuses on deception and links the strategic, operational, and tactical objectives of a large scale, centralized deception operation .at the U.S. Military's

---

<sup>148</sup> Nelson, 37.

<sup>149</sup> Ibid.



War Colleges, Command and General Staff Courses as well as the School for Advanced Air Power Studies, School for Advanced Military Studies, and School for Advance Warfare.

- Allow U.S. military commanders to create the conditions that allow planners to truly think “out of the box” as opposed to being processed focused in order to encourage the requisite creativity complex deception plans require.
- Integrate SOF with the conventional military on a more routine basis. Currently, there is one Army Special Operations Coordinator permanently assigned to each Army Corps. Consider expanding to include permanent representation at the Division level on a rotational basis and include in the Joint community as well. The better the Army understands SOF, the more likely it is for SOF to be used as a shaping force as well as a deception effort.
- Consider providing one Army Special Forces Operational Detachment (SFODA) under tactical control for each Army Division on a rotational basis and during the Special Forces support cycle. This habitual relationship will greatly improve interoperability between SOF and conventional forces.
- The art of deception can only be practiced by organizations that are willing to delegate a considerable amount of authority to, and have confidence in a small group of people. In short, there must be tolerance for the existence of ‘artist’ among ‘bureaucrats’ and enough confidence and patience not to insist on immediate results.<sup>150</sup>

Deception will continue to offer serious advantages to military leaders with the Imaginativeness, determination, and discipline to incorporate it. Deception remains a powerful tool for reducing the bloodshed inherent in war, as well as having an enormous influence on its outcome.<sup>151</sup> Special Operations Forces will continue to offer the U.S. military a unique capability to

---

<sup>150</sup> Gooch and Amos, 137.

<sup>151</sup> Latimer, 311.

conduct deception. No other force in the U.S. military is as adaptable or possesses the combination of experience, skills, training, flexibility, linguistic, and cultural capabilities. SOF remains the only tool in America's arsenal that possesses all of these capabilities and is a proven entity in conducting economy of force deception in support of large-scale conventional shaping and decisive operations

## BIBLIOGRAPHY

- Adams, James. *Secret Armies*. New York, NY: Atlantic Monthly Press, 1989.
- Archer, Chalmers. *Green Berets in the Vanguard*. Annapolis, MD: Naval Institute Press, 2001.
- Bank, Aaron. *From OSS to Green Berets*. Novato, CA: Presidio Press, 1986.
- Brown, Ashley. *The Green Beret: U.S. Special Forces from Vietnam to Delta Force*. New York: Villard Books, 1986.
- Butts, Gregory K. "Russian Deception Operations: Another tool for the Kitbag." Monograph: School for Advanced Military Studies, Command and General Staff College, AY 98-99.
- Chandler, David G. *The Campaigns of Napoleon*. NY: Simon and Schuster, 1974.
- Charters, David A. and Maurice A.J. Tugwell. *Deception Operations: Studies in the East-West Context*. Oxford, England: Brassey Publishing, 1990.
- Clausewitz, Carl V. *On War*. Translated by Michael Howard and Peter Paret. Guilford, Surrey: Princeton University Press, 1984.
- Collins, John M. *Green Berets, SEALs, and Spetsnaz*. McLean, VA: Pergamon-Brassey's International Defense Publishing, 1987.
- Conboy, Kenneth and Dale Andrade. *Spies and Commandos: How America lost the Secret War in North Vietnam*. Lawrence, KS: University Press of Kansas, 2000.
- Dewer, Michael. *The Art of Deception in Warfare*. NY: Sterling Publishing, 1989.
- Eldridge, Justin. "The Myth of Army Tactical Deception." *Military Review*, no. 70 (August 1990).
- Emerson, Steven. *Secret Warriors: Inside the Covert Military Operations of the Reagan Era*. New York, NY: G.P. Putnam's Son, 1988.
- Galambas, Louis. *From the Papers of Dwight David Eisenhower The Chief of Staff*. MD: John Hopkins University Press, 1979.
- Gooch, John and Perlmutter, Amos. *Military Deception and Strategic Surprise*. London, England: Cass Publishing, 1982.
- Grau, Lester. *The Takedown of Kabul: "An Effective Coup de Main"*
- Halberstadt, Hans. *Green Berets: Unconventional Warriors*. Novato, CA: Presidio Press, 1988.

- Handel, Michael. *Sun Tzu and Clausewitz Compared*. Carlisle Barracks, PA: Strategic Studies Institute, U.S. Army War College, 1991.
- Hart, Basil Henry Liddell. *Strategy*. New York: Signet Books, 1974.
- Hayden, H.T. *Shadow War: Special Operations and Low Intensity Conflict*. Vista, CA: Pacific Aero Press, 1992.
- Latimer, Jon. *Deception in War*. New York: John Murray Publishers, 2001.
- Larrabee, Eric. *Commander in Chief*. New York: Harper and Row Publishers, 1987.
- Lloyd, Mark. *The Art of Military Deception*. South Yorkshire, Great Britain: Pen and Sword Books, 1997.
- Malcom, Ben S. *White Tigers*. Washington D.C.: Brassey Publishing, 1996.
- Miller, David & Gerard Ridefort. *Modern Elite Forces*. London, United Kingdom: Salamander Books, 1992.
- Nadel, Joel. *Special Men and Special Missions*. London, United Kingdom: Greenhill Books 1994.
- Naveh, Shimon. *In Pursuit of Military Excellence*. Portland, OR: Frank Cass Publishers, 1997.
- Nelson, Bradley K. "Battlefield Deception: Abandoned Imperative of the 21<sup>st</sup> Century." Monograph: School for Advanced Military Studies, Command and General Staff College, AY 97-98.
- Office of the Assistant Secretary of Defense for Special Operations Policy and Support. "Special Operations Forces Posture Statement." Washington D.C.: United States Government Printing Office, 2000.
- Quarrie, Bruce. *The World's Elite Forces*. New York, NY: Berkley Publishing Company, 1988.
- Rottman, Gordon L. *U.S. Army Special Forces 1952-1984*. Oxford, United Kingdom: Osprey Publishing Botley, 1985.
- Shackley, Theodore. *The Third Option*. New York: McGraw Book Company, 1981.
- Simpson, Charles M. *Inside the Green Berets: The First Thirty Years*. Novato, CA: Presidio Press, 1983.
- Stanton, Shelby L. *Green Berets at War*. Novato, CA: Presidio Press, 1985.
- Thompson, Phillip S. "U.S. Army Deception Planning at the Operational Level of War." Monograph: School for Advanced Military Studies, Command and General Staff College, AY 90-91.

- Tung, Mao Tse. *On Protracted War*. Peking: Foreign Language Press, 1967.
- Tzu, Sun. *The Art of War*. Translated by Ralph D. Sawyer. Boulder, CO: Westview Press, 1994.
- Tzu, Sun. *The Art of War*. Translated by Samuel B. Griffith. London: Oxford University Press, 1971.
- U.S. Army JFK Special Warfare Center. *Army Special Operations Forces Publications* [CD-ROM]. FT Bragg, NC: Directorate of Training and Doctrine, July 2000.
- U. S., Department of the Army. "Battlefield Deception Operations." [Online] Available <http://call.army.mil.call.newsletter/3-88/batl.htm>, September 21, 1997.
- U.S., Department of the Army. *FM 3-0, Operations*. Washington, D.C: Government Printing Office, June 2001.
- U.S., Department of the Army, *FM 90-2, Battlefield Deception*. Washington, D.C: Government Printing Office, October 1988.
- U.S., Department of Defense, *JP 3-58, Joint Doctrine for Military Deception*. Washington D.C.: Government Printing Office, May 1996.
- US. Special Operations Command. *Joint SOF Education*. MacDill AFB, FL: US. Special Operations Command, Center for Operations, Plans and Policy, 2000.
- Walker, Greg. *At the Hurricane's Eye*. New York: Ballantine Books, 1994.
- Waller Douglas C. *The Commandos*. New York: Simon and Shuster, 1994.
- Zedric, Lance Q. *Elite Warriors: 300 Years of America's Best Fighting Troops*. Ventura, CA: Pathfinder Publishing, 1996.